

On 11 May 1999, and again on 25 May, I was delighted to record this species again at the same place. It was netted at around 22:30 as it flew out of oak woodland towards my light set up at the wood edge. Apart from Harpenden, the nearest known other records are in Essex (where a strong colony is known at Epping Forest, largely consisting of the dark form *ab. columbina* Image), and a very recent record from Ruislip Woods in Middlesex.

The moth is regarded as widely distributed, but rather local, throughout the British Isles by Skinner (1984. *Colour identification guide to moths of the British Isles*), although recent records may suggest that it is spreading.

Mardley Heath consists of oak-hornbeam woodland (some of which is regarded as ancient), and large areas of birch woodland which has grown over shallow chalk extraction pits. Other noteworthy species recorded at this site in 1998 include Poplar Lutestring *Tethea* or D.&S., Birch Mocha *Cyclophora albipunctata* Hufn., Brindled White-spot *Parectropis similaria* Hufn., Scarce Prominent *Odontosia carmelita* Esp. and Buff Footman *Eilema depressa* Esp.— ROB SOUTER, 54 Willowmead, Hertford, Hertfordshire AL14 2AT.

Least Black Arches *Nola confusalis* (Herrich-Schaffer) *ab. columbina* Image (Lep.: Nolidae) found outside Epping Forest

Examining the contents of my Skinner my trap on 25 May 1999 I noticed a first for my garden in Bengoe, Hertfordshire (TL 324137) in the form of a Least Black Arches *Nola confusalis*. This is a moth of decidedly local distribution in the county, being recorded only from Harpenden (Riley, *antea* 71-94) and Mardley Heath (Souter, *antea* 198). Further examination of what was a rather greyish specimen suggested that it could be of the form *ab. columbina* previously only recorded from Epping Forest some 25 km to the south east in Essex. The nearest woodland is 1 km away. Colin Plant kindly confirmed this was indeed *ab. columbina* after examination of the specimen and a photograph I had taken.— ANDREW WOOD, 93 Bengoe Street, Hertford, SG14 3EZ.

Brimstone butterfly *Gonepteryx rhamni* L. (Lep.: Pieridae) egg-laying on dock *Rumex* sp.

Whilst walking along a country lane through an area of farmland near Pagham, Sussex, on 26 May 1999, I was most surprised indeed to encounter a female Brimstone butterfly in the act of oviposition on a dock *Rumex* plant. Altogether a total of four eggs were laid whilst I watched, on the under-surface of the leaves. As far as I am aware, buckthorn *Rhamnus catharticus* and alder buckthorn *Frangula alnus* are the only recorded food plants of this butterfly's larvae and this is confirmed in Emmet (1989. *Moths of Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland* 7 (1): p. 97) who repeats the observation of Frohawk (*Entomologist* 73: 68-69) that introduced *Rhamnus alaternus* and *R. alpina* may also be accepted.— PETER MAY, 6 Aigburth Avenue, Aldwick, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO21 3DA.